



Caring Thoughts

Grant County Hospice Program

Summer 2007



Living With Grief

Someone you love very much has died. The pain and fear wash over you in waves. You may feel that you cannot bear it. You wonder if you will survive. After the initial "shock" of the death wears off, there are several stages of grief you may experience.

Hard on the heels of shock comes denial. You may comprehend what has happened, but on a deeper level, all of your habits and memories deny it.

Denial may remain in some form for months or years. There is no required time to get rid of it. Some people intentionally don't visit the grave, some leave the deceased person's possessions untouched. Do what feels right for you as you gradually move toward acceptance.

Anger is a normal response. It can range from mild to raging, depending on you. The important thing to remember is that anger needs to be expressed. Bottling up anger causes stress. Eventually the cork comes off, one way or another.

Few survivors escape without some feelings of guilt. Whatever your situation, realize that feelings of guilt and regret are normal. Meet them and dispose of them.

When numbness wears off and rage is exhausted, depression may arrive. A hopeless feeling takes over. This is the time when you need a friend, someone to listen and not judge. Someone who will allow you to ramble on and on. A friend can also help you find a diversion, an activity for both body and mind.

Time alone will not heal grief. You will have to deal with it, to work through it. In the process, you can actually change grief into personal growth. You can become something more than you were. Build on your memories. Though you must accept your loved one's death, you need not sever all ties. Recall the humorous times and laugh about them. Don't worry about laughing "too soon". Remembering with laughter is healthy.

You will remember and grieve a little all the rest of your life. No one can tell you, of course, how long or in what manner you "should" grieve-your grief is unique. Whatever you do, do not waste your life in unproductive sorrow. The best memorial to a loved one is a full growing life.

The Gift of Grief	2
Nature's Way	2
	3
	3
	4

Some articles are taken from
Bereavement Magazine,
5125 N. Union Blvd., Suite #4
Colorado Springs, CO 80918
(719) 266-0006 or
(800) 604-4673
Website:
www.bereavementmag.com

Afterward: The Gift of Grief

Grief is the intense emotional response to the pain of a loss. It is the reflection of a connection that has been broken. Most important, grief is an emotional, spiritual, and psychological journey to being.

There is wonder in the power of grief. We don't appreciate its healing powers, yet they are extraordinary and wondrous. It is just as amazing as the physical healing that occurs after a car accident or major surgery. Grief transforms the broken, wounded soul that no longer wants to get up in the morning, a soul that can find no reason for living, a soul that has suffered an unbelievable loss.

Grief alone has the power to heal. The reality is that you will grieve forever. You not "get over" the loss of a loved one; you will learn to live with it. You will heal, and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again, but you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same, nor would you want to.

With the power of grief comes much of the fruits of our grief and grieving. We may still be in the beginning of our grief, and yet, it winds its way from the feelings of anticipating a loss to the beginnings of re-involvement. We have survived a loss. We are allowing the power of grief and grieving to help us to heal and to live with the one we lost.

That is the Grace of Grief.....That is the Miracle of Grief.That is the Gift of Grief.

Source: From the book: On Grief & Grieving by Elisabeth Kubler-Ross & David Kessler



Poetry as Therapy

During my life, certain poems have become therapeutic resources for me. The memories, images and even fears evoked by certain passages of poetry have multiple impact on the one reading, reciting, or listening to it. Poetry has the potential to help us in a number of ways.



Poetry-enables us to think the unthinkable, to master our fears, to begin to imagine a positive outcome. It assures us that others have experienced our pain and have survived to write about it. It encourages us to put our feelings into words and phrases. It encourages us to make contact with others, to share our feelings. It can offer an explanation in a situation that challenges reason.

Whether we choose to write, play music, go for a walk, pray, we need "arts" to help us cope with and to find our way back to belief in humanity.

Source: A paper entitled, "The Little Sounds of Grief: Poetry & Grief" by William Lamers, MD



Do You Have Something to Share?

If you have something that you would like included in the next issue of Caring Thoughts, please contact me. Learning about other people's experiences and feelings is helpful and essential in working our way through the grieving process. Please email your thoughts, tips, book reviews, poems, announcements, etc. to gchdhospice@tds.net or mail them to:

Mareeta Kolman
111 South Jefferson Street
Lancaster WI 53813

Thank You.....

Memorial contributions and donations enable us to extend comfort, care, and support to other patients and their families. We are grateful!



In Memory of Irene Kelly
Her Family

In Memory of Donald "Gibby" Gibson
His Family

In Memory of Cecelia Ketterer
Her Family

In Memory of Eugene Mergen
Marjorie Mergen

In Memory of Laura Graney
Richard Graney Family
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In Memory of David Olsen
Randi Olsen
Carolyn Woodward

Her Family
Gary & Nona Fehlhaber
Nancy Wells
Ken Carp & Karen Anderson-Carp
Rossing Excavating, LLC
Dallas Cohen

Other Donations

Danny & Deborah Sargent
United Way of Dane County



Planting Flowers in Memory of Loved Ones

Roses: Red~Love; Pink~Grace; White~Purity or Innocence; Yellow~Joy
Lilies~Purity
Pansies~Thinking of You
Sunflowers~Adoration

Violets~Faithfulness
Zinnias~Thoughts of the Absent One

Carnations~Pure Love
Daisies~Innocence
Irises~A Message



Stress Relievers:

Talk it Out: Talking relieves stress and sometimes makes you see things more clearly.

Escape for a While: Lose yourself in a favorite hobby, book, movie, or other hobby.

Work Off Your Anger: Energy from anger can build. Work & exercise can release that pressure & relieve stress.

Do Something for Someone Else: This helps to take your mind off your own life & can even put your problems into perspective. It also makes you & the person you're helping feel good.

Take One Thing at a Time: If you're feeling overwhelmed, make a list of things you need to attend to and then tackle them one at a time.

Don't Expect Perfection: You can't do all things in the exact way that you want to, & not everything can be done by you. Don't expect too much of yourself.

Schedule Recreation: Don't work so hard that you haven't allowed time to relax or have fun.

Seek Help: Find that family member or friend to listen or help out in any way you need. Seek help from Clergy or a professional.

Keep A Journal: Writing down thoughts and feelings is similar to talking it out with a trusted companion. It works!

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Volunteering is a Work of Heart

The Grant County Hospice Program is offering classes for anyone interested in becoming a volunteer.



Classes will be held on **Tuesdays** from **4:30pm-7:30pm** at the Grant Health Department, 111 South Jefferson Street in Lancaster. The classes are scheduled for:

August 28, 2007
September 4, 2007
September 11, 2007
September 18, 2007

Classes cover the Hospice philosophy and caring for the medical, psychosocial and spiritual needs of the terminally ill and their families. Volunteers play an important role while working with the professional staff to give support and care to our patients and their families.

If interested in becoming a volunteer, please call Mareeta Kolman at Grant County Health Department Hospice Program, 608-723-6416. You may also email her at gchdhospice@tds.net

"It is one of the most beautiful compensations of life—no man can sincerely try to help another without helping himself." Ralph Waldo Emerson